

Speak Up Sonoma County



...give youth a voice and the  
freedom to hear

### Talking Points for Advocacy

- Free to Be is not in violation of the education code of CA, but addresses important requirements of the ed. code, including teaching the value of abstinence, respect for marriage, and that abstinence is the only certain way to avoid STDs and pregnancy.
- The education code of CA requires a strong emphasis on abstinence and Free to Be provides this. Free to Be is an integral part of comprehensive sex education and is not seeking to be a stand alone message.
- Free to Be is a health and abstinence education organization which is and has been non-sectarian/non-religious since its beginning in 1992. Free to Be was started by a group of youth and adults who shared a concern that teens were not hearing all their choices regarding sexual decision-making. Initial start-up funding was from Santa Rosa Memorial Hospital.
- Free to Be materials have been developed by youth and our first curriculum was written at the request of the Santa Rosa City School District in 1995.
- After initial affiliation with Catholic Charities, a human service organization that serves homeless families, patients with Alzheimer's, and others, Free to Be formed its own nonprofit in 2007.
- Free to Be informs teens of the choice of living an abstinent life-style, teaches important relationship skills, and encourages teens to plan goals for the future.

- Free to Be uses a “primary prevention” strategy consistent with other health programs that address youth risk-taking behaviors such as tobacco, drugs, and obesity.
- Free to Be is a peer-to-peer program which uses young people as presenters who serve as positive role models for healthy decision-making.
- Free to Be provides “an important and always omitted perspective about sexual choices teens have which is the only antidote to the media’s presentation of sex.” (high school health teacher)
- Free to Be follows a youth development model in which youth are supported and encouraged in making positive decisions and have opportunities to take leadership roles in their peer groups and in their communities.